



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY GARRISON BENELUX
UNIT 21419
APO AE 09708

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

IMEU-CHV-PAI

22 June 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: USAG Benelux Command Policy Letter 18*, USAG Benelux Proper Use of E-mail

1. References:

- a. AR 25-1 Army Management Knowledge and Information Technology Management
- b. AR 25-2 Information Assurance
- c. AR 25-1-4 Public Key Infrastructure.
- d. AR 25-50 Preparing and Managing Correspondence

2. Policy:

- a. Your E-mails are a permanent, electronic record, reflecting on you and your organization. Assume your E-mails will be forwarded and you will have no control over who eventually receives them. Keep E-mails professional. Significant disagreements, sensitive issues and "emotional issues" are best solved in person or over the phone.
- b. Remember and respect the chain of command in your E-mails. When sending an E-mail to a supervisor do not routinely CC his or her supervisor. This undermines your supervisor's ability to prioritize, evaluate, and staff information before "the boss" sees it. Additionally, it clutters everyone's inbox. Similarly, when sending an E-mail to a subordinate, do not routinely cc his/her subordinates for the same reasons.
- c. Counsel and mentor in person not by E-mail. E-mail is great for passing information and an extremely poor tool for leadership. Effective and meaningful counseling and mentoring is done in person.
- d. Forwarding E-mail – do some staff work first! Typing "FYI" and forwarding an E-mail is not good staff work. As a minimum, briefly state what is important in the E-mail and why your supervisor should read it. Your boss needs a brief summary and/or key information cut and pasted in to your message, not just another forwarded E-mail.
- e. The "To" line, courtesy copy "CC" line and blind courtesy copy "Bcc" line have different purposes. "To" indicates you expect some action from the person you sent the E-mail to, this may be as simple as the expectation to read the E-mail or it may require much more work. "CC" indicates only the expectation that the recipient will read or scan the E-mail, no action is

required. Blind copy "Bcc" allows the sender to send an E-mail to the "Bcc" while the recipients on the "To" and "Cc" lines are unaware that the person on the "Bcc" line also received the E-mail. Be careful using the "Bcc" line, often its use is inconsistent with Army Values. A good time to use the Bcc line is when sending an E-mail to a large group, for example large distribution list. In this case using "Bcc" allows the sender to hide the E-mail addresses of all the recipients from each other. This also can save paper if someone prints the E-mail by eliminating the page or more of E-mail addresses at the top of the message.

f. Ask "who needs this information?" before you send an E-mail to multiple addresses. A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself "would I phone or walk into his or her office to discuss this issue?" If the answer is no then reconsider if sending the E-mail is appropriate.

g. Use technology. Use auto spell check. Your work E-mails are official documents so use the auto signature tool to put your name, title, organization and phone number at the bottom of every E-mail.

h. Don't lose the personal touch. E-mail is not a substitute for the person to person communication that a telephone call or personal, face-to-face office visits affords you. What you think you save in time, you have lost in effective human communication if you become a prisoner of your desk and your computer.

i. If an E-mail is intended to convey a message in which there is a critical time hack, the suspense date will be included in the subject line of the E-mail.

j. The Distribution List (DL) "ALL" listings will only be authorized to those who have a valid need to send to these listings. Any effort to circumvent the use of these listings will result in account suspension.

k. Do not use inappropriate salutations. Appropriate salutations would be: Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Ms. Mrs, etc.

l. Foul or inappropriate language is unauthorized.

m. If it is possible to consolidate information into a single E-mail as opposed to sending many E-mails, then do so.

n. Limit the size of attachments to be sent to 5MB. If larger files need to be transferred please contact your IMO for guidance.

o. Be extremely vigilant that Classified E-mails are not sent on the unclassified system.


p. Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Digital Signatures will be used when the identity of the sender must be verified and encryption will be used when the E-mail contains unclassified operationally sensitive data.

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q. When using digital senders ensure document is named appropriately.

3. Proponent: USAG Benelux Plans, Analysis and Integration Office, 361-6254.


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